

D/NESA 84-279
6 November 1984

MEMORANDUM FOR: Director of Central Intelligence

FROM:

25X1

Director, Near Eastern and South Asian Analysis
Directorate for Intelligence

SUBJECT: Defense Policy Dilemma in the Subcontinent

1. Action Required. None; for your information only.
2. Rajiv Gandhi's accession to power has -- perhaps -- given Washington a new opportunity to improve its position in India. But this opportunity is not without risks to the US relationship with Pakistan. In any event, US moves in the subcontinent will require careful planning and deft footwork lest Washington come out a net loser vis-a-vis both India and Pakistan.
3. US policy toward Pakistan will be a major determinant in the next months in the shaping of Rajiv's policy toward the United States. An improvement in relations with New Delhi probably would require that US security ties to Islamabad be slowed or even frozen at their present level.
 - Deployment of E-2Cs to Pakistan for Pakistani evaluation, agreement to provide the Pakistan Air Force immediately with 100 AIM-9Ls, or a commitment to sell Copperheads to the Pakistan Army would be interpreted by New Delhi as evidence the US intends to pursue an "anti-Indian" policy.
 - Statements implying that the US security commitment to Pakistan extends to the threat from India similarly would be counter-productive in efforts to improve relations with New Delhi.
 - The Soviets will place considerable emphasis in their media and in private channels on US and Pakistan collusion against India. US activities that could be interpreted in New Delhi as anti-Indian would reinforce Soviet propaganda.

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4. US efforts to improve relations with India, on the other hand, will raise alarms in Pakistan, notably so if the pace of US-Pakistani dealings slows.

- Many Pakistanis continue to doubt the reliability of the US as a long-term ally and see US policy as motivated by tactical expediencies.
- Postponing the E-2C visits to Pakistan or deferring decisions on the various weapon systems to avoid sending the "wrong signal" to Rajiv would almost certainly be viewed in Islamabad as a "signal" of a lessened US commitment to Pakistan's security interests, particularly now when Pakistan faces intensified Soviet pressure along the Afghanistan border.

5. The Soviets also could further complicate US efforts to improve relations with India (without compromising relations with Pakistan) by intensifying military pressure on Pakistan.

- This would cause Islamabad to press the US for a tangible signal of continued US support for Pakistan's security.
- India would view such activities as evidence of a US anti-Indian policy.

cc: DDCI
DDI

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